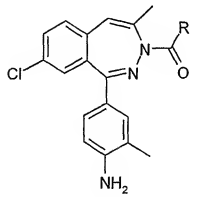
CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claims 1 through 14 (canceled).

Claim 15. (currently amended) A compound of the formula (I)



(I)

wherein

R is a lower alkyl group or ~~a group of the formula NH-R¹~~ -NHR¹,

wherein

R^1 is a lower alkyl or a lower cycloalkyl group [[)]], or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 16. (previously presented) The compound of the formula (I) as defined in claim 15, wherein R is C_1 to C_4 alkyl, or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 17. (previously presented) The compound of the formula (I) as defined in claim 16, wherein R is methyl or ethyl, or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 18. (currently amended) The compound of the formula (I) as defined in ~~claim 1~~ claim 15, wherein R is ~~a group of the formula $-NH-R^1$~~ $-NHR^1$, and R^1 is a C_1 to C_4 alkyl or a C_3 to C_6 cycloalkyl group, or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 19. (previously presented) The compound of the formula (I) as defined in claim 18, wherein R^1 is a methyl or a cyclopropyl group, or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 20. (previously presented) The compound of the formula (I) as defined in claim 15, selected from the group consisting of:

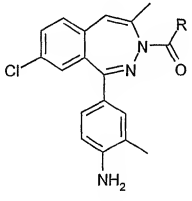
(a) 1-(4-amino-3-methylphenyl)-8-chloro- 4-methyl--3H-2,3-benzodiazepine 3-carboxylic acid methyl amide;

(b) 1-(4-amino-3-methylphenyl)-8-chloro-4-methyl--3H-2,3- benzodiazepine-3-carboxylic acid cyclopropyl amide;

(c) 3-acetyl-1-(4-amino-3-methylphenyl)-8-chloro-4-methyl-3H-2,3-benzodiazepine; and

(d) 3-propionyl-1-(4-amino-3-methylphenyl)-8-chloro-4-methyl-3H-2,3-benzodiazepine, or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 21. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula (I)



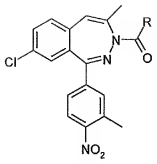
(I)

wherein

R is a C_1 to C_6 alkyl group or ~~a group of the formula -NH-~~ ~~R^1~~ -NHR^1, wherein

R^1 is a C_1 to C_6 alkyl or a C_3 to C_7 cycloalkyl group, or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof, which comprises

(a) reducing a compound of the formula (II),

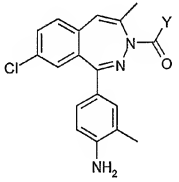


(II)

wherein R is as stated above; or

for the preparation of a compound of the formula (I) wherein R is specifically ~~a group of the formula NH R^1~~ -NHR^1 wherein R^1 is as stated above,

(b) reacting a compound of the formula (IV),



(IV)

wherein Y is a lower alkyl group or a leaving group, with a compound of the formula (V),

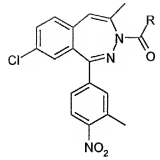
(V)

wherein R^1 is as stated above,
and, if desired, converting the compound of the formula (I) thus obtained into a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 22. (currently amended) A pharmaceutical composition for treating ~~a central nervous system disorder~~ cerebral ischemia comprising as active ingredient a therapeutically effective amount of the compound of the formula (I) as defined in claim 15 or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof in admixture with an inert solid or liquid carriers and/or auxiliary agent.

Claim 23. (currently amended) A method of treating a patient suffering from ~~a central nervous system disorder~~ cerebral ischemia to protect the patient from neuronal loss, which comprises the step of administering to said patient in need of such treatment, a therapeutically effective amount of the compound of the formula (I) as defined in claim 15 or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

Claim 24. (currently amended) A compound of the formula (II)

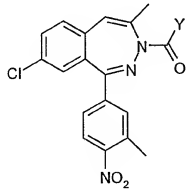


(II)

wherein R is a lower alkyl group or ~~a group of the formula -NH-R[1]~~ -NHR[1], wherein

R^1 is a lower alkyl or a lower cycloalkyl group [[)]], or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof.

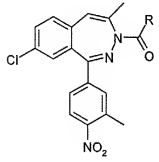
Claim 25. (previously presented) A compound of the formula (VIII)



(VIII)

wherein Y is a leaving group.

Claim 26. (currently amended) A process for the preparation of a compound of the formula (II)



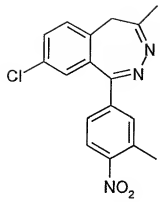
(II)

wherein

R is a lower alkyl group or ~~a group of the formula -NH-R^1~~ -NHR^1,

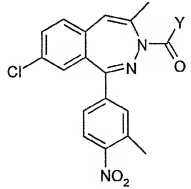
wherein

R^1 is a lower alkyl or a lower cycloalkyl group [[)]], or a pharmaceutically acceptable acid addition salt thereof, which comprises the steps of: reacting a compound of the formula (VII)



(VII)

with a reagent capable of introducing a Y group, and reacting the thus-obtained compound of the formula (VIII)



(VIII)

with a compound of the formula (V)

$$H_2N{-}R1 \qquad (V)$$

to obtain the desired product.